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AND THE STARS SAW

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L. C.



# AND THE STARS SAW

W r i t t e n b y  
THOMAS WOOD STEVENS  
& ALDEN CHARLES NOBLE

P i c t u r i n g s b y  
I V A N S W I F T



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THE POEMS

THE PONIARD OF DAY  
AS HAPPENS FOR THE FAIL-  
URE OF SATISFACTION  
THE KEY WHICH UNLOCKS  
THE DOOR FROM EITHER  
SIDE

THE LOSER  
GALLOWS  
ILLUSIONARY  
TWIN  
REWARD  
WINDSWEPT  
WHO WEDS GOLD  
OF THE OPTIMIST AND THE  
SMILE OF THE SKULL  
FRAILTY  
FOG

Of this book there have been 333  
copies printed, of which this is num-  
ber

109

## FOREWORD

We thank you, Stephen Crane,  
for this strange and subtle medium.  
As to the things we have written  
therein, they are ours; we have  
thought them out between us.

T. W. S.

A. C. N.



## THE PONIARD OF DAY

IN dim dusk of dawn  
A knight rode a gray far plain.  
His blood leaped for cool lone-  
someness;  
He cried a wild vacant cry,  
"Oh plain, give company.  
"Bear me warriors to crashing battle  
here,  
"Myself shall break them,  
"By the Lance of the Dark, broken  
"Shall they be.  
"And by my hand."  
The spreading plain cried answer  
Echoless, so shrill he scarce heard,  
On all hands.  
"By the grim Lance of the Dark  
"We shall conquer  
"And the hot Poniard of Day shall  
make end."  
So the knight rode,  
Shouting.



Day, and a molten white sun.  
The gray plain shimmering white.  
The knight rode  
Groaning in his mail of despair.  
He shook himself and shouted  
"Oh plain, give company.  
"Let silent dark battle be;  
"I will break thy champions,  
"I will break thee, oh plain."  
And the trembling plain cried,  
Roaring hot.  
"The hot Poniard of Day shall  
    make end.  
"Be silent."  
The knight's voice sunk.  
Failed into the hollow breast of his  
    mail.





Night, and the gray plain cried  
Everywhere exulting to the leering  
stars.

And the stars saw.  
The knight was still.

## AS HAPPENS FOR THE FAILURE OF SATISFACTION

A poor man was  
Once in the everlasting earth.  
A silly starved man,  
A thin greedy man.  
"Oh world," said the man,  
"Give me bread or I die!"  
And the whimpering world gave  
bread.  
"Stupid," grumbled the man,  
"Where's the marmalade?"

THE KEY WHICH UNLOCKS  
THE DOOR FROM EITHER  
SIDE

**T**HIS is the key,  
This thing of steel, uncom-  
promising.  
Under her breast, driven hard  
It may bring me revenge and white  
honor—  
And night-cold, dark, starting  
Remorse.

If I thrust it still harder between my  
    breathing ribs  
And twist it, work it about  
For free blood flow, and quick end,  
It may bring vast sleep;  
Or any one of many things whereof  
    all men preach  
Differently,  
And each believes the preaching of  
    another.  
It is the key.

## THE LOSER

A MAN was working  
"Do not that," said I,  
"Come and be merry."  
"You are a Fool," he said  
And he worked.  
Examinations came.  
I passed. The man flunked.  
"You cribbed," said the man.

## GALLOWS

**I**N this dread engine of the witch-  
ery of Death  
I see the tumult between dream  
and dream.

I basked in the Friendship of God;  
Ignored, knowing well my Friend;  
I had strength  
And for the hate of an enemy.  
Ah,  
Between dream and dream  
I must feel a stiff cold rough noose  
tight on my throat.  
A fuzzy hemp noose.

I am cut dead in the highway,  
To seek another Friend,  
Having lost the Friendship of God.

## ILLUSIONARY

**A** BROWN eye  
Is only a little ring  
Centered of wee transparent  
black

On a white small globe

With lashes.

And the lashes should be long and  
curved.

Restless and lifesome,

Because of the muscles that move it,

It can do nothing

Nothing

Save what the nerve countenances.

It has no power.

But some brown eyes—

When I look into their pupils—

I forget all the things.

## TWIN

**D**UAL is my Soul,  
(If there be any such un-  
proved thing)

Of two, similar yet not alike;

One, a sympathetic cynic

Careless, heedful, irrelevant;

And the other a melancholy opti-  
mist

Spendthrift, selfish, worshipful.

And both dream and are lazy.

If I have a Soul.



## REWARD

**A** DOG is Love embodied;  
Liquid speaking Love.  
Encased in various hair;  
Upon four legs.  
Love asking nothing of return,  
Love that puts life a toy  
For tyrant master.  
Love that thrives on curses, kickings.

The rattle of a tin can  
Tied to the tail of Love  
Is a pleasing sound.

## WINDSWEPT

**A** LONG the streets  
The winter whinnying wind  
Howls.

And the chilled people,  
The helpless hurrying people,  
Turn up their collars  
In vain endeavor to keep the snow  
Out of their necks.  
Vain endeavor.

The hackmen shout harshly  
To their struggling, straining horses,  
And curse in loud howlings  
That mingle with the wind,  
The fretful, whining wind.

## WHO WEDS GOLD

**A** GIRL, red, black, white.  
Red is a royal bloom.  
Is she the worse  
For an independent gratuity.  
For great surfeit of world's things,  
She is still royal.  
And in her presence, it appears  
I think I love her,  
Sometime I am certain of it.

You argue poorly.  
There are a host of ways  
To be miserable,  
To be wretched.



## OF THE OPTIMIST AND THE SMILE OF THE SKULL

**A**N optimist,  
A foolish man of firm fixed  
smile,  
Gazed on a sullen dead silent skull—  
Head of Death's past.

The skull to the man  
Echoed the smile,  
Useless, meaningless.  
The man, gay laughing cried,  
"Ha! and yet he knows,  
"Knows smiling."

The man lied.  
The skull was a woman's.  
Sardonic on his mirthless grin  
She smiled.



## FRAILITY

I LOVED a man and he was a  
God,

I walked with him in silly  
easy ways

And we came to a Deep Ditch

Brown, slimy, writhing,

"Leap," I said

And he looked long at the Ditch,

Then leaped he trembling white.

He fell in the writhing brown

And died.

I wept, for

Mine was a mortal God.

## FOG

**P**UFF-wreaths of curling gray,  
White against the sable vacantness

Of night.

Muffled, groping a tardy way  
Through cotton fog,  
The chimes come, broke now  
By sound of escaping steam.  
Sides of gray blearing white  
Under uncert shadow wraiths  
Of undreamed canvas.  
The world is a round Universe,  
Of ten foot radius.  
With tangible soft sides,  
Which, broken, merge to other  
Similar Universes.  
Mingle with curling fog-wreath  
Chime of bells,  
In the thick, rough bank  
Of night.





Rows of blinking, blurred lights,  
Lights flashing at even space,  
Bow to stern.  
On all ways, ocean, fog.  
Careless laughter, music, unremem-  
brant joy,  
Within.  
Without, above, alone,  
Two eyes glare watchful ever,  
Unbeguiled by merryness below.  
A shape — ahead, on all sides  
White, whiter than gray-white fog.  
“Hard —”  
A cabin passenger shrieks at the  
crash.

Spiteful the sun rises,  
Orange, spiteful.  
Welcome at first, cheerless  
Then, with blank bare sea.  
Bright is the day, and blue.  
The wind is alone.





**H**ERE END-  
 eth the lit-  
 tle book of  
 verses called ✽  
 ✽ AND THE  
 STARS SAW;  
 no part of which  
 was ever printed  
 before. ✽ ✽ ✽ ✽  
 It was written ✽  
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 Stevens and ✽  
 Alden Charles ✽  
 Noble. ✽ ✽ ✽ ✽  
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